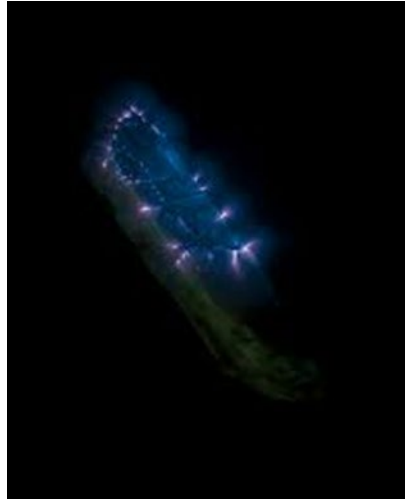


EDUCATOR GUIDE



Marjolijn Dijkman Earthing Discharge

September 4, 2020 – March 21, 2021



Welcome!

Dear Educators,

We are delighted for you join us as the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) brings you the work of Marjolijn Dijkman in the lobby from September 4, 2020 – March 21, 2021.

Dijkman displays a large-scale photo collage which highlights her current photography series, Earthing Discharge. In this series, Dijkman captures the glow of electrical fields. Combining imaging technologies with objects such as cell phones, batteries, and circuit boards, she seeks to bring underlying socio-political structures and their environmental entanglements to light. Earthing Discharge is an extension of the artist's research into the history of electricity and the environmental impact of contemporary energy storage.

We invite you to explore, create, immerse yourselves, and discover what stories, connections, and lessons can be found within this exhibition.

Enjoy!

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Marjolijn Dijkman

- Born in 1978 in Groningen, The Netherlands
- BFA from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam (2001)
- post graduate positions at the Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam (2003) and Jan van Eyck Academy, Maastricht (2006-07).
- International exhibitions include the Sharjah Biennial (2007); Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (2010); Marrakech Biennial (2012); Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2014); Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2015); Shanghai Biennial (2016); Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (2017); and Sydney Biennial (2018), among others.
- Resides and works in Brussels.



About Dijkman's work

- Work includes a combination scientific methods and imaging technologies
- Highlighting socio-political structures
- Fascinated in the space between fact and fiction, abstraction, and speculation, challenge the ideological and cultural hegemonies of Western science.
- Mediums include film, performances, photography, and object use/manipulation

Quotes

“...my practice concerns itself with futurology, history, museology, human geography and ecology amongst others. Whereas some of the works are developed in dialogue with a specific context, other recent projects are ongoing with multiple outcomes.”

-Marjolijn Dijkman

“The works can be seen as a form of science – fiction; partly based on facts but brought into the realm of fiction and speculation.”

-Marjolijn Dijkman

Vocabulary/Key words

electrical waste ephemera macrocosm microcosm
colonialism resources corona discharge

Themes

Wonder: Earthing Discharge returns to this moment in time when electricity was still made visible, in contrast to today where most electrical processes are hidden from the eye and taken for granted.

Hidden Stories: Dijkman's work brings to light the stories of electronic waste and the exploitation of resources from and labor by previously, and currently, colonized countries and peoples.

PRE-VISIT DISCUSSIONS

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

In 1939, Betty Pollak Rauh, Peggy Frank Crawford and Rita Rentschler Cushman took the advice of Edward M.M. Warburg, the founding father of the American Ballet and a founder of the Museum of Modern Art. He suggested that rather than stress about finding non-existent art jobs in New York, "Why not starting something in Cincinnati? Plenty of room there. If you decide to try, come and see me and I'll help you." By August of that year, Peggy Frank Crawford, Betty Pollack and Rita Rentschler raised \$5000 (about \$93,000 today) and created the Modern Art Society (MAS). For almost a year their "office" consisted of a letter file and a portable typewriter set up in one or another living room. Within a few years, the MAS had exhibited Renoir, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso, Beckman, Klee and many more in the lower levels of the Cincinnati Art Museum. In 1952, the MAS changed their name to the Contemporary Arts Center and in 1964 they earned a space of their own in downtown Cincinnati. In 2003, the CAC moved into the Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art designed by architect Zaha Hadid. The NY Times called the structure, "the best new building since the Cold War."

The Contemporary Arts Center is a non-collecting institution, meaning there is no permanent collection. All exhibitions are borrowed from artists, collectors and other art galleries and institutions. We strive to create exhibitions that allow visitors to "open their minds" to the arts, and to the dialogue that can be had when viewing contemporary art. We believe that art and

the creative process belong to all people and that contemporary artists are an important part of how we see and interact with our world today.

ABOUT THE LOIS & RICHARD ROSENTHAL CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS

In the late 1990s, after acquiring the lot on which the Contemporary Arts Center now sits, a committee narrowed a field of over 300 architects chose to design the building—first to 97, then to 12 and finally 3 of the most exciting designers working in the world today. From them, a unanimous choice emerged: Baghdad-born, London-trained Zaha Hadid.

The decision was in keeping with the CAC's 60-year history of promoting the new. Though Hadid had been the subject of adulation, study and controversy, her work exhibited at major museums with international critical acclaim, she had only completed two freestanding structures during her career. As a largely untested inventor, a woman and an Arabic Muslim, Hadid had not found the construction world easy to enter. This renowned building is Hadid's first American building and is the first American museum building designed by a woman. Groundbreaking took place in May 2001 and the new Center opened to rave reviews on May 31, 2003. The seven-story, 82,265 square-foot Contemporary Arts Center is named the Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art after the CAC's former Chairman of the Board and the most generous contributor to the new building. It sits on a narrow 11,000-square-foot footprint and includes a 2,366-square-foot black box performance space.

Born in Iraq in 1950, Hadid received her degree in mathematics from the American University in Beirut and studied at the Architectural Association in London where she won the Diploma Prize in 1977. Upon graduation, Hadid became a partner at the Office of Metropolitan Architecture where she worked with influential architects Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis. Establishing her own practice in London in 1979, she soon gained international attention with her groundbreaking plan for the Peak International Design Competition for Hong Kong in 1983. In 2004, she became the first female recipient of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, which is the equivalent to the Nobel Prize for Architecture. In 2008, she was listed as one of Forbes Magazine's "100 Most Powerful Women," and in 2010, Time Magazine named her one of the "100 Most Influential People in the World," and UNESCO Artist for Peace. She was awarded the Stirling Prize for Architecture in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, Hadid was awarded Damehood by Queen Elizabeth II. And, in 2015, she received the Royal Gold Medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects. Hadid died in 2016.

RULES AND GUIDELINES

- Visitor admission and school tours are free at the Contemporary Arts Center.

- We require that there must be a chaperone for every 5 students under the age of 18 for self-guided groups. For docent-led tours, the required ratio is 1 to 10 for students through grade 5 and 1 to 15 for students grades 6-12.
- No backpacks, coats or lunches are permitted in the galleries, but personal belongings may be stored in the large bins or lockers we have available. Instructors may keep any emergency bags and purses with them.
- Currently photography is permitted in all areas of the museum. The CAC encourages you to post photos to various social media sites using @CincyCAC and #CincyCAC.
- Pens are not permitted in the gallery spaces. Pencils are available for use at the front desk.
- Walk throughout all galleries—no running, climbing, or roughhousing. If visiting with students under 18 please provide guidance and supervision.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

- Our facility is ADA compliant and we will make every effort to provide accommodations when requested.
- Hearing protection is available upon request.
- Fidgets are available upon request.
- Sensory maps and social stories are available upon request.
- Large text is available upon request.
- Two quiet spaces are available—the Lower Level Lobby and the Contemplation Room.
- For further inquiries or requests, please contact Shawnee Turner at sturner@cincycac.org.

ARTWORK DISCUSSIONS

These discussions can occur during and after viewing.

- How do you think these were made? What kinds of materials do you see? Why do you think the artist used these materials?
- Electricity is the backbone of the modern industrialized society. When it was expanding in use around 1900, many feared it, believing it to be magic or witchcraft. Now, although it is an everyday part of our existence, there remains a mystery around electricity. Why do you think we maintain such curiosity around a common thing in our lives? What are some of the ways in which we think of electricity differently now than we did one hundred years ago?

- How has the visual or viewing aspect of electricity changed since its invention?
- The dichotomy of the micro- and macrocosm is applicable to Dijkman’s art. She shows us the micro views of electricity and technology, which are invisible to the naked eye. How do you view electricity and technology on the macro level—your everyday life?
- “Exploring perception and world views through the lens of diverse fields of thought, the artist asks: How can shifting between the macroscopic and the microscopic help us to imagine complex systems that are otherwise hard to grasp?”
- What is electrical waste (e-waste)? How many electronic devices do you have lying around your house that no longer work? How easy is it to recycle these devices?

LESSON PLAN IDEAS

- Dijkman begins her art process with extensive research. She thinks like a scientist. Students can walk around their house and collect data, such as: how many phones, other electronics, batteries, power outlets, loose cords they can find around their house? How many work? How many don’t?
- For this specific work, *Earthing Discharge*, Dijkman focuses on viewing technology at micro levels. Using photography, students can take photos of objects at the micro and macro levels. This would provide an opportunity to discuss abstraction as well.
- Because Dijkman is fascinated in the space between fact and fiction, abstraction and speculation, biomorphic drawings could be a great project. Students would choose an organic object as their subject and elaborate through drawing until it was abstracted, taking on another form, or identifier.
- Dijkman’s piece at the CAC acts as a wallpaper for a large wall in the lobby. Students could make their own wallpaper pattern and display it on a small section of wall at home or in the classroom.

ARTWORK AND WALL TEXT INFORMATION



Earthing Discharge, 2020

Color photomontage, printed on vinyl

272.2 x 346 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Nome Gallery, Berlin

Introductory Wall Text

Marjolijn Dijkman's (b. 1978 in Groningen, The Netherlands) approach employs scientific methods and imaging technologies to bring underlying socio-political structures and their environmental entanglements to light. Operating in the space between fact and fiction, and abstraction and speculation, she creates films, performances, objects, and photographs that challenge the ideological and cultural dominance of Western science. Earthing Discharge is an extension of the artist's research into the history of electricity and the environmental impact of contemporary energy storage. By documenting materials linked to what may become one of the largest lithium mines in the world in Manono in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dijkman comments on the ecological fallout generated from mining this valuable mineral and the toxic electronic waste produced as a result of the rise of green energy.

For this commissioned wallpaper, Dijkman creates a collage comprised of photographs depicting items associated with technology and energy use —minerals, circuit boards, and personal devices. Arranged across our 40-foot lobby wall, the images are rendered in high contrast, emphasizing the objects' electrical fields and radiant glow. Dijkman's labor-intensive process involves activating the conductive matter using high voltage electricity and photographing them through heat conductive glass similar to what is used in smartphones. The resulting blue and purple halos and irregular linear rays, a phenomenon known as corona discharge, is caused by the ionization and electrical disturbance of adjacent air. The photographic collage makes visible electric currents that we rarely see, calling attention to the systems of extraction that support most of the world's modern energy, communication, and mobile computing technologies.

RESOURCES

<https://ccs.bard.edu/people/452-marjolijn-dijkman>

<http://mousse magazine.it/marjolijn-dijkman-navigating-polarities-nome-berlin/>

www.tique.art/six-questions/marjolijn-dijkman

http://www.marjolijndijkman.com/?rd_project=earthing-discharge&lang=

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core Standards

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

Ohio Common Core Links

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/OLS-Graphic-Sections/Learning-Standards>

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Fine-Arts/Fine-Arts-Standards>

Kentucky Common Core Links

<https://education.ky.gov/curriculum/standards/kyacadstand/Pages/default.aspx>

https://education.ky.gov/curriculum/standards/kyacadstand/Documents/Kentucky_Academic_Standards_Arts_and_Humanities.pdf

Indiana Standards Links

<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards>

<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards/fine-arts-dance-music-theatre-visual-arts>

Aesthetic Perspectives: Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change

<http://www.animatingdemocracy.org/aesthetic-perspectives>